

Proverbs 29:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The king that faithfully judgeth the poor, his throne shall be established for ever.

Analysis

The king that faithfully judgeth the poor (מלך שופט באהמת דלים)—a king who judges with truth/faithfulness (emet, reliability, covenant loyalty) toward the weak (dalim, the brought-low), **his throne shall be established for ever** (כסאו לעד יכין). The verb yikon means to be firm, stable, enduring. Royal legitimacy rests on justice for the vulnerable.

This is the Davidic ideal: Psalm 72 describes the messianic king defending the poor and crushing the oppressor. Isaiah 11:4 prophesies the Branch judging the poor with righteousness. Jesus fulfills this perfectly—identifying with the least, defending the marginalized, establishing an eternal throne through righteous judgment. Proverbs teaches that power exercised for the powerless creates lasting authority; tyranny is inherently unstable.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern kings claimed divine mandate to protect widows, orphans, and the poor—this was standard royal ideology. But Israel uniquely made this standard the criterion for dynastic stability. Prophets held kings accountable: David's injustice toward Uriah brought instability; Solomon's oppression caused schism; Ahab's crimes brought judgment. Justice for the poor wasn't optional philanthropy but constitutional requirement.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does this proverb challenge modern political theory about the foundation of governmental legitimacy?
2. In what ways does Christ's eternal throne rest on His identification with and judgment on behalf of the poor?
3. What does 'faithful' judgment of the poor require beyond charity—how does it involve structural justice?

Interlinear Text

לְעֵד	כַּפְאֵל	דָּלִימָד	בָּאָמֵת	שָׁוֹפֵט	תְּהִלָּת	לְגָדְלָה
for ever	for ever	the poor	that faithfully	judgeth	the king	
H5703	H3678	H1800	H571	H8199	H4428	

:||!

shall be established

H3559

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 16:12 (Kingdom): It is an abomination to kings to commit wickedness: for the throne is established by righteousness.

Isaiah 11:4 (Judgment): But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.

Proverbs 29:4 (Judgment): The king by judgment establisheth the land: but he that receiveth gifts overthroweth it.

Proverbs 20:28 (Kingdom): Mercy and truth preserve the king: and his throne is upholden by mercy.

Proverbs 25:5 (Kingdom): Take away the wicked from before the king, and his throne shall be established in righteousness.